Banning Indian satellite channels in Pakistan

1251. SHRI C. RAMACHANDARAIAH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Pakistan Government has ordered all the cable TV operators to stop relaying telecasts and broadcasts of all Indian satellite TV Channels;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) whether Government are taking any steps to check and counter Pakistan TV's anti-India propaganda?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) and (b) The Karachi-based Cable TV Operators Association is implementing what it calls a "self-imposed ban" on Indian TV news channels on the grounds that these channels are indulging in anti-Pakistan propaganda. The move to block these channels has been adversely commented on by various sections of public opinion in Pakistan.

(c) Government is aware of the anti-India propaganda carried by Pakistan Television. Such propaganda is regularly countered by the Prasar Bharti Network through specially commissioned programmes like *Pakistan Reporter, PTV Such Kya Hai, Pookhta Saboot, Date Line Kashmir, Kashmir Nama, Kashmir Now etc.* The daily media briefings of the Ministry of External Affairs, as well as other regular interviews and media opportunities arranged with both national and international media are also aimed at effectively countering the disinformation campaign launched by Pakistan.

Indian fishermen captured by Pakistan

1252. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA:
SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of fishermen abducted by the Pakistani Marines recently near Jakhus of Kutch and other areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the fate of these fishermen;

(c) the number of fishing boats captured during the last two years; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government to bring them back to their families?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) and (b) As per information received from the Government of Gujarat, 100 Indian fishermen and 17 boats have been apprehended by Pakistan Maritime Security Agency in January and February this year. Subsequently, there have been reports that another 94 fishermen and 16 boats have been taken in custody by Pakistani authorities on March 4th and 5th, 2002.

(c) Pakistan apprehended a total of 320 Indian fishermen and 53 boats during the last two years *i.e.* 2000 and 2001. All these fishermen with their boats were got released and repatriated to India in November/December, 2001.

(d) Government have taken up the issue of release and repatriation of recently apprehended Indian fishermen/boats with the Government of Pakistan through diplomatic channels.

Indo-Nepal agreement to monitor borders

1253. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Nepal have entered into an agreement to monitor the borders and to prevent flow of arms and ammunitions to terrorists and Maoists;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether despite agreement flow of arms and ammunitions and terrorists continue from borders of Nepal; and

(d) if so, the further strategy to be adopted by Government to prevent entry of arms and ammunitions and terrorists from the Nepal borders?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF